[For information on the use of animal skins for clothing and bedding, cf. pp. 143-157, category 116--Analyst]

2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

281

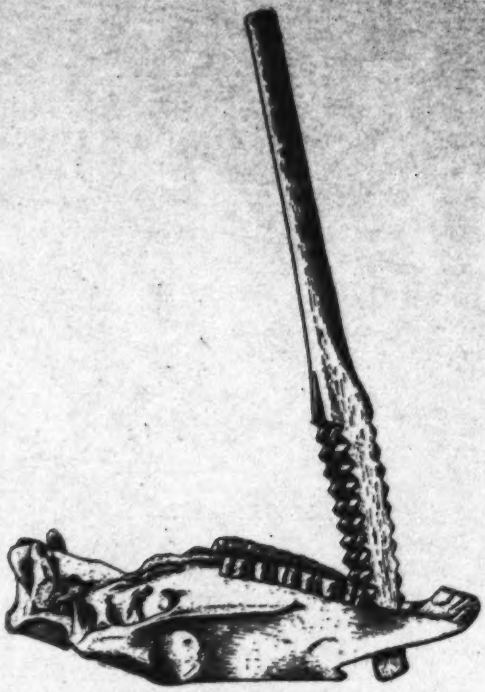

Fig. 17 (70-8853*ab*). A Skin Dressing Tool used to soften Skins. See Fig. 18 for the method of use.

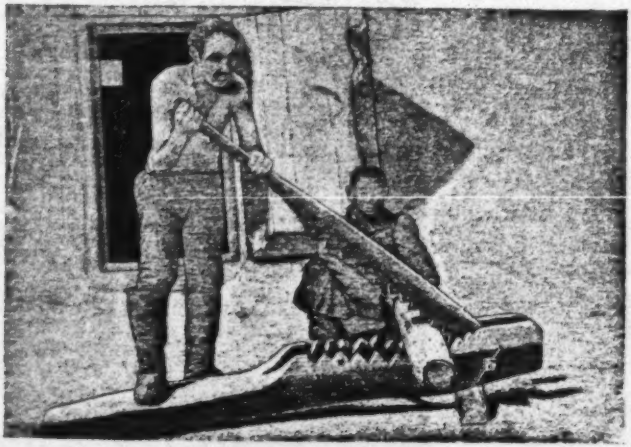

Fig. 18. Skin Dressing in Front of the Hut of an Impoverished Yakut.

6: Sauer--131 [2] G-5 (1785-94) 1802 Yakut
116, 281, 294, 386

"They dress leather for use in the following manner: For symirs, they take a fresh skinned cow's or horse's hide, and steep it in water a few days, when the hair easily rubs off. It is then hung up till nearly dry, when they lay it in blood until soaked through, and then hang it in a smoky place for a considerable time: of this they make their buckets and soals of boots, &c. as the latter are completely water-proof, and the buckets, or symirs, even retain oil. The legs of boots they make of colt's or calf's skins, scraped and rubbed till they be soft, then sewn, steeped in blood, and dried in smoke; afterwards blackened with wood-coals and fat several times, and smoked again; they then are water-proof. Elk and deer skins are dressed with and without the hair on, by being covered with a paste made of clay, and the undigested food from the maw; or with cow-dung hung up till nearly dry, then rubbed and scraped till soft. They are then either kept of their natural colour, or dyed of a red colour with the bark of alder and ashes boiled together, or else of a yellow colour with the roots of sorrel."

11: Lansdell--302-303 M-3 (1879) 1882 Yakut
116, 281, 291

"I bought a pair of women's Yakute boots of this leather. [303] They fit tight to the leg, and have at the top a flap of black velvet with red cloth trimming, which can be turned down and exposed for show in fair weather, or turned up, bringing the boots to the thighs. On each boot are two broad leather thongs, five or six feet long, to wind round the leg. Waterproof boots are here made, called by the Russians torbasis. These are cut from horse-hide, steeped in sour milk, then smoked, and finally rubbed well, with fat and fine soot. They last exceedingly well and are an inestimable comfort to the wearer, enabling him to tramp through snow, water, and mud without inconvenience."

12: Galitzin --145 -146 N-2 (no date) 1853 Yakut
116, 104, 291, 281.

"The tail forms an indispensable part of the costume of the Yacoutes; both men and women wear it so long, that in order to support it they tie it behind round the waist. The summer costume of the men consists of a kaftan (a Turkish vest) descending to the knees, made with China tissue or with cloth, lined all round with some stuff of a showy colour. For their feet they have boots with a soft sole. The Sarama is a kind [146] of buskin made with horse-hide, which is waterprbof. Trowsers of reindeer-skin, a cap, and gloves which only have the thumb, complete their garment. This costume is common to both sexes. In winter, for the simple kaftan, they substitute a furred dress. They wear also torbases, or furred boots, having the hair outside. During this severe weather the traveller puts on a large riding-coat, called sanaiak, made with reindeer-skin having equally the hair outside: he applies upon his forehead, cheeks, and ears, pieces of furmade on purpose, and surrounds his knees with soutouvi, or bands. The furred robe which the women wear in winter is called parka: it is made with reindeer-skin, and has the form of a long shirt. The sleeves and the collar are trimmed with furs of the finest quality. The dress of the wealthy Yacoutes is often very expensive."

17: Erman--298-299 N-3 (1828-29) 1850 Yakut-1-2
116, 291, 171, 281

"For winter travelling, the Yakuts, like the Ostyaks and Samoyedes, wear a fur frock, with the hair outside. Even here this outer garment is generally made of reindeer skins, yet the poorer people use for the same purpose the skins of slaughtered horses and oxen. To this garment is always given the form befitting the saddle, which I have mentioned before. It is trimmed round the edges with black furs, and is ornamented on the back with elaborate figures, in the same material. It is called sanayakh, a name given also to the over-coat of the women, which is, indeed, distinguished from that of the men only by its greater length; it is cut up behind, and adapted for riding, just like the other. During the milder part of the year, and for a long stay in the house, a garment of the same shape as the sanayakh, but made of extremely pliant leather, dyed yellow, is substituted for it. Yet it is not uncommon to find in the yurts men and women with the upper part of the body naked, when they return from the open air to the fire, or have just got up from their sleeping benches, for the cloaks are worn immediately next the breasts. Both sexes wear, moreover, on the lower part of the body, drawers of pliant reindeer skin, which, like those of the Ostyaks, reach from the loins to the middle of the thigh; leggins, which are fastened to the lower end of the drawers, and water-proof boots. This last, and most excellent, part of their dress, is called eterbàs, from which name the Russians here, who, decidedly and justly, prefer the Yakutian boots to European shoeing of any kind, have made torbasà. They fit every where close to the leg, and cover it from the sole of the foot to far above the knee; at the same time, owing to their perfect

pliability, they are as convenient, for pedestrians as for horsemen. That they may be at once flexible and water-proof, the torbasàs are always cut of thin horse-skin; which is steeped, in the first place, in sour milk, and smoked, and then rubbed well with fat and fine soot from the chimneys. The sole, also, is made of the same kind of leather; the seams are sewed inside, and towards the toe there is a point turned upwards, just as in the boots of the Bashkirs at the present day, and in those of Russian horsemen in the sixteenth century. But, on the other hand, these boots are without the high heels which make the walk of the Bashkir and Kirgiz so awkward and ungainly. Two long strings of leather are sewed to the torbasas at the bottom, to be fastened tight round[299] the leg, first at the ankle, and then, when they have been brought behind the calf, again under the knee, where their ends are tied together."

17: Erman--305 N-3 (1828-29) 1850 Yakut
116, 281, 415

"These bags, made by the Yakuts, and alone used here by the Russians, are called súmui. They are made of horse-leather, with the hair stripped off. The side thus stripped is turned outwards, and, from its smoothness, and whitish hue, it closely resembles parchment. The súmui most carefully made, are those used for carrying flour from this to Okhotsk and Kamchatka. They are cylinders only three or four inches high, and about a foot and a half in diameter, joined by a scarcely visible seam inside, and filled through a small opening in the side. On the journey, they lie with the flat surface against the animal's flanks."

39: Jochelson E-5 (1888-97) 1906 Yakut

quantity of cold water which has been previously boiled; and the mixture is put into an ox-hide bag or churning-vessel called *simir* (Plate XVIII, Fig. 4), and some of the above-mentioned ferment is added to it. The only use of the water is to increase the quantity; so that when a strong kumiss is desired, less water is added to the milk. The churning-bag is made of ox-hide which has been soaked in blood. This gives it a black color, and also makes it water-tight. For the latter purpose it is also smeared, particularly the seams of its sides, with melted butter. It is ornamented with beads of different colors and with brass or silver pendants.

Before the preparation of kumiss, the churn is placed on a low stool (called *simir oloho*) not far from the fireplace (Plate XIX, Fig. 3), and is hung by a long ornamented ribbon, which passes through brass rings at the neck of the vessel, to one of the middle posts of the house. This is done in order that the churning-bag, when softened by the fluid contained in it, shall not drop down. The ribbon is of black and white horsehair twisted, and is ornamented with leather tassels. In the mouth of the churn is a hollow wooden mouthpiece called *kōñkölöi* ("hollowed through," from *kōñdöi*, "hollowed"), through which the churning-stick (*xamsatar*, from the verb *xamsat*, "to stir") passes into the churning-vessel (Plate XVIII, Figs. 1, 4; Plate XIX, Figs. 1, 2). Both the mouthpiece and the churning-stick are ornamented with engravings, and brass or silver rings and pendants. The churning-stick is usually in the shape of a horse's hoof. The process of churning lasts from a day and a half to two days, and the women and children often assist in it. The kumiss is then poured into hide or birch-bark barrels, and is ready for use. Such kumiss has an agreeable acid taste, and contains but very little alcohol. The Yakut have no bottles in which to store their kumiss, but when travelling they put it into skin bags of the same shape as the churning-vessels. The opening of the bag is closed by two small sticks tied together at their ends. The bags are placed on the riding or pack horses like saddle-bags. They thus form skin bottles, in which the fermentation continues working out the alcoholic qualities, and the kumiss becomes a strong and heady drink.

40: Burr --107-108 N-2 (no date) 1931 Yakut
116, 177, 281, 291, 352, 492

" The Yakuts evidently have a sense of the beautiful, for their clothing, made of the skins of reindeer, horse and dog, are not only very warm and comfortable, but decidedly pleasing to look at. The blending of the browns, blacks, fawn and white has an excellent effect, and is usually worked out in a chequered pattern in very good taste. They are expensive, though, and I was asked three hundred roubles for an outfit, about thirty pounds. But nowadays, of course, they have disappeared from use before Russian factory products. There was a specimen of a kamalán or rug, made in this same pattern, which attracted me very much. I was very anxious to acquire one, but was told they are rare, and that the Yakuts generally are very unwilling to part with them. A still finer specimen was a native saddle. This was somewhat on the lines of the Cossack design, with high pommels, but was richly ornamented with little round disks of lead, in the absence of a more decorative local metal, and the saddle-cloth was a particularly effective piece of [108] patchwork in variously coloured skins. "

/258 cont./

291 In all other handcrafts, too, the Jakuten /Yakut/ do very com-
• 281 mendable work. The Jakut wading boots made of horse leather with flexible soles, which are absolutely waterproof, are highly praised. The carpets made out of black and white horsehide in various patterns, usually put together in checkerboard fashion, form a separate industry.

122 After we had recovered somewhat and had gotten rid of our useless Cossack, who was sent along with a courier dispatched to Irkutsk by the governor, we also considered our departure. We had to make the journey as rapidly as possible, because along the greater part of our way, just as here in Jakutsk the smallpox epidemic raged at the highest pitch. All our quickly won friends here, among whom I must mention the veterinary Dr. Hollmann, a Livonian, who has befriended more than one traveler, gathered together in our quarters on the afternoon of December 16 in order to see us off. Since we ourselves were now spared the great concern about our collections and instruments, which for the most part were being sent, well packed, at government expense -- the Imperial Geographical Society enjoys the privilege of free transport for all shipments addressed to them or sent by them, provided only that the individual packages do not exceed one pood in weight -- it was all the same to us that the parting was prolonged until late in the evening.

In two sleds, Czekanowsky and I in a kibitka purchased here, the Tungus in a baggage sled to be repacked at every station, we finally raced out /259/ into the winter night, now again, according to the custom of the country, a stouthearted team of three horses in front of us. Although the still unfamiliar section of our present route of travel to Kirensk -- circa 2,000 versts -- offered enough of interest to us and in many places was particularly distinguished by picturesque beauty, we could no longer permit ourselves scientific investigations under the prevailing circumstances. We went on without rest day and night; there was no question of any difficulties in transport because, by means of the courier sent ahead of us, all the station masters were instructed to have the best horses waiting for us; at most our sleds occasionally needed some repairs. The way led, with a few

skillfully made; the wooden crockery was usually decorated with carving, while the birchbark objects were decorated with horsehair designs. 322

Fur-dressing and tanning were very common. The materials were made into a great variety of different things—clothing, footwear, and headgear; carpets, underlays (usually made of horse- or cow-hide, often sewn together from pieces into a checkered mosaic), blankets (from horse-skin); the leather vessels were made in a variety of sizes, ranging from the enormous simiir' for kumys down to the tiny pail or tursuk; various parts of saddles, straps, nooses and so on. The actual working of the leather and fur was very primitive—the hide was smoked (in ancient times and even in the 17th century this was done in earth stoves), crumpled, smeared with oil or cream, and there was no true tanning. The manufacture of reindeer suede was evidently learnt from the Evenks and the Evens. The Yakuts themselves did not make any cloth, either from animal wool or vegetable fiber—and only used what was imported. They did not know about spinning, nor how to roll felt. On the other hand, horsehair was widely employed; it was used for the ornamentation of birchbark and other objects, particularly for braiding different kinds of lassoes, cord, laces and nets, loops, fans to keep flies away, stuffing pillows for saddles and so on. The Yakuts also wove horsehair for decorative purposes. The individual hairs were twisted into a thread by hand on a bare knee, without using a spindle. 281 ● 286 283 439 531

Blacksmithery was the only trade among the Yakuts which had long acquired commercial importance, although normally it was not a separate trade from agriculture. In the 17th century the Russians found it to be highly developed among the Yakuts. The iron was obtained from marsh ore, of which there was a great deal, particularly on the Vilyuy. The ore was mined along the rivers Botoma, Amga, Sola and others. It was first smelted in primitive blast furnaces. But at the beginning of the 20th century the Yakut smiths were already working with imported iron. They forged it into a variety of implements and utensils, weapons and so on. Apart from iron, the Yakut smiths worked low-grade silver, which in the 19th and 20th centuries was partly obtainable by melting down Russian coins. This silver was made into various ornaments, linings for belts, whips, horse harnessing. The equipment used in the smithies was fairly unsophisticated—furnaces worked with bellows (portable), anvils, hammer and tongs. 326 [316]

The fact that they engaged in ceramics singles out the Yakuts from the people around them. They evidently retained pottery as a relic of the Neolithic stage. Nevertheless, it was very primitive. To the dark, viscous clay they used to add powder ground from old fired pots and then mold the clay mixture diluted with water into the walls of the pot with their hands (without a wheel), using a stone to smooth them out (on the inside) and a trowel (on the outside). The pots were fired in the hearth. The pottery varied in size and the shapes and designs were crude. In the last few decades, Yakut ceramics have been replaced by Russian ones. 323

Mammoth-ivory carving (Yakutiya is rich in mammoth skeletons), which was probably not begun before the 19th century, was not a common trade, although it was an interesting one. The ivory was carved into a variety of trinkets and small boxes. 321

These were the main types of production among the Yakuts prior to the Revolution. As a whole, the Yakut economy remained at a fairly low level of development, and by and large remained a subsistence economy. Nevertheless, the sale of homemade products acquired ever-greater importance towards the end of the 19th century. This was mainly the case 433 443

53:Tokarev and Gurvich E-4 (no date) 1964
RV2 Yakut RV2

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Yakut sleigh.

Another means of overland transportation was the ski, which was lined underneath with horsehide and not reindeer suede. The Yakut boats were no different from the Tungus ones. They had a canoe (tyy) made of birch-bark or else flat-bottomed and made from planks. The larger vessel—the karbar—had sails and was evidently borrowed from the Russians. [177]

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Settlements and Buildings

Until recently the Yakut settlements were very much scattered about. The prevalent type of populated point (yal) consisted of one, two or three yurts standing in a row; there were less than 20 people (according to the

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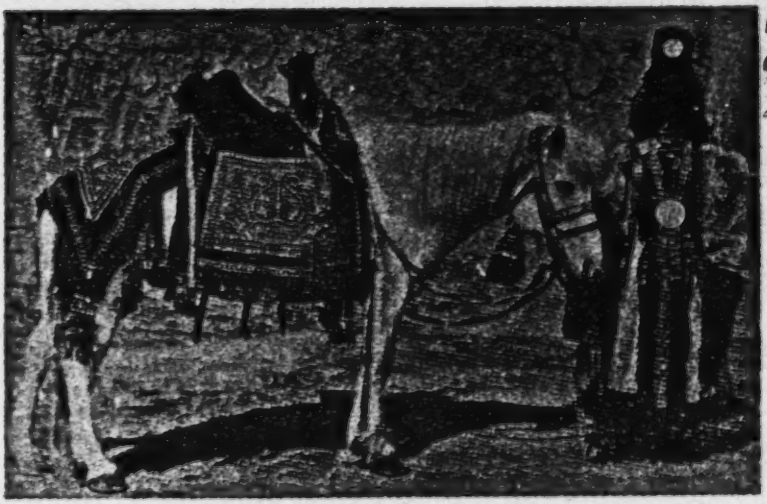

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Yakut woman with horse festively saddled.